

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 5-14, and 16 will be pending in the present application. Claim 3 has been cancelled. Claims 4 and 15 were cancelled in a prior Amendment.

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claim 3 represent allowable subject matter. The limitations of claim 3 have been incorporated into independent claims 1, 9, and 12. Thus, these independent claims are believed to be in condition for allowance, as are the claims depending therefrom.

Claim 5 has been amended above to correct the dependency of this claims so that it depends from independent claim 1. Applicant requests that this amendment to claim 5 be approved.

Claims 1, 2, 5-14, and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 or § 103 as being anticipated or rendered obvious by various references. Applicant respectfully submits that the above amendments to the independent claims, in which the limitations of allowable claim 3 have been added to each independent claim overcomes these rejections as to independent claims 1, 9, and 12. Claims 2, 5-8, 10-11, 13-14, and 16 are also not anticipated or rendered obvious due to their dependency from independent claims 1, 9, or 12. Accordingly, applicant respectfully request that the above rejection of claims 1, 2, 5-14, and 16 be withdrawn.

This response is being filed within the three-month statutory response period which expires on June 9, 2004. In addition, no additional claim fees are believed to be required as a result of the above amendments to the claims. Nevertheless, the Commission is authorized to charge the any fee required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17 to deposit account no. 50-0558.

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All objections and rejections have been addressed. It is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and a Notice to the effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

By Michael W. Haas

Michael W. Haas

Reg. No.: 35,174

Tel. No.: (724) 387-5026

Fax No.: (724) 387-5021

RESPIRONICS, INC.
1010 Murry Ridge Lane
Murrysville, PA 15668-8525